

The Fallacy of Extreme Pacifism

(The Editor Invites Contributions Concerning This Subject
From A Different Point Of View)

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The fallacy of extreme pacifism, according to A. Lawrence Lowell, author of "The Student Mind," lies in the idea that any one nation's remaining defenseless can bring about frankness and mutual confidence among nations. One might as well expect to abolish banditry by disarming a town's police force.

Although I fully agree with Mr. Lowell, to me the real emptiness of pacifism is shown by its lack of any constructive

policy. I refuse to consider peace at any price a constructive policy. Pacifists have nothing to boast equaling the heroism given for the destructive necessities of war. I would rather do what I can in defense of principles in which I believe, than stand aside and do nothing.

The pacifist, in time of war, lives in a dream world. When a nation has been struck and strikes back, non-resistance by any citizen is itself participation in the war. Even though he does not agree with his country, the pacifist's indifference makes him a participant in war—on the enemy's side. This is the pacifist's predicament.

To believe, as extreme pacifists do, that our highest allegiance is to the human race as a whole, is too indefinite. We can do more good by pledging allegiance to our country and working to make it a country with liberty and justice for all—a country which may be an example to others.

If, as the extreme pacifists advocate, wars can be stopped with spiritual power before they are started—let them do it! If not, let us do what we deem necessary.

When the world is confronted by powerful aggressors, I favor doing something about it—not letting incidents occur about me and doing nothing to prevent them.

I have read that Gandhi's leadership in India was a good example of pacifistic ideas in action. But India was fortunate in that fair-minded England was her opponent. Can you imagine Gandhi gaining India's independence through pacifistic principles if he were behind the "iron curtain?"

Russian support of Wallace's "peace at any price" third party clearly reveals that pacifism in the United States would be playing into Russian hands.

If our country had been prepared, the whole course and origin of World War II might have been different. There were too many pacifistic doctrines taught in our schools. Too many people tended to think in pacifistic terms. Now, only befitting our contemporary history, we tend to think in militaristic terms. Republican and Democratic party platforms, third party results, and recent congressional action seem to prove our militaristic tendencies.

I sincerely believe in the words spoken by A. Maude Raydon concerning the failure of pacifism. She said, "When my pacifistic friends ask me whether I can imagine Jesus Christ's dropping a bomb or firing a gun, I'm entitled to say, 'No, I cannot, but neither can I imagine His standing aside and doing nothing.'"

At this critical point in world history, let us hope that many pacifists reconsider and see the fallacy in their principles in the light of their inability to accomplish them.